Action Against Star TV

371. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Honourable Home Minister had assured the Rajya Sabha on May 9, 1995 that action would be taken against Star TV for their atrocious comment on Mahatma Gandhi;

(b) whether it is also a fact that he had assured the House that, if necessary, fresh legislation would be passed to take care of such irresponsible programmes;

(c) if so, what action Government have taken in the matter; and

(d) what legislation if any, Government are contemplating?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.B. CHAVAN): (a) to (d) In his response to the Special Mention in the House on May 9, 1995, the Home Minister had stated that if the present law fails short of the requirement going in for a new legislation would be considered. Any fresh legislation has not been considered necessary. In the meantime a stiff warning has been issued to the Star TV network and Television Eighteen India Limited to desist from a repetition of such misdemeanour in future. Also the programme has since been taken off the air.

Study for the Formation of Indian Ocean Trade Zone

372. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the suggestion of ASSOCHAM that a study be undertaken on the formation of special trade zone comprising countries in the Indian Ocean Zone; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is positively inclined to consider suggestions for cooperation among the Indian Ocean Rim countries. It has initiated exploratory contacts with the interested countries to determine the possibility and scope of such cooperation.

India participated in the first International Meeting of Experts from seven Indian Ocean Rim Countries (viz. Australia, India, Kenya, Mauritius, Oman, Singapore and South Africa) convened by Mauritius at Port Louis from March 29-31, 1995. The Meeting agreed on the principles, objectives and direction of the future action programme of an Indian Ocean Rim Initiative beginning with these seven countries to promote cooperation in trade, investment science and technology, tourism and human resource development.

Laying of new rail lines in Karnataka

373. SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to lay new rail lines in Karnataka during the current year; if so, the names of the places to be connected as a result thereof;

(b) whether any survey in this regard has been conducted; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by when work in this regard will commence?

THE MINISER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A new rail line is being constructed between Kottur and Hairhar.Subsequent to its inclusion in the Railway Budget 1995-96 and approval of Parliament, Final Location Survey has